

REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, your committee appointed on the part of the House to join a like committee on the part of the Senate to notify the President of the United States that a quorum of each House has been assembled and is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make has performed that duty.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 4, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAME SPEAKER: Under Clause 2(g) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I herewith designate Ms. Marjorie C. Kelaher, Deputy Clerk, and Mr. Jorge E. Sorensen, Deputy Clerk, to sign any and all papers and do all other acts for me under the name of the Clerk of the House which they would be authorized to do by virtue of this designation, except such as are provided by statute, in case of my temporary absence or disability.

This designation shall remain in effect for the 110th Congress or until modified by me.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2001, and the order of the House of today, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) as members of the House Office Building Commission to serve with herself.

LIEUTENANT (JG) GERALD FORD

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, during the great World War II, the U.S. aircraft carrier *Monterey* faced its fiercest naval battle, not with the Imperial Japanese Navy, but the storm of the sea, Typhoon Cobra.

A naval lieutenant (jg) answering the call to action motivated the crew to combat against the Cobra's bone-crushing waves, torrential rains, and consuming fires it caused on board the ship.

Refusing the order to abandon the ship, this warrior valiantly went below, marching into the mouth of the fire, rescuing those trapped within its grasp. He ignored the searing heat of

the flames and the blackness of the smoke. Hour upon hour this man led others in the charge to extinguish the demon fire, saving fellow sailors and officers.

He did not seek recognition in the darkness of 1944; it sought him. When it called, this naval officer answered in a manner of all American patriots, with courage, valor, and victory.

Twenty-nine years later, this same individual helped rescue an entire Nation from the fire of corruption and war. And he brought peace. His name was President Gerald Ford, and we thank him.

And that's just the way it is.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that the whole number of the House is 435.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1945

LANCE CORPORAL LUKE YEPSSEN, TEXAS WARRIOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it has been said, "We are United States Marines, and for two and a quarter centuries we have defined the standards of courage, spirit, and military prowess."

These are words spoken by United States Marine Corps General James Jones. This describes the elitism of those chosen few who wear the title of United States Marines.

Luke Yepsen was one man whose life was making a difference at a very young age. He personified the core values of the United States Marine Corps of honor, courage, commitment.

He was from Kingwood, Texas, a close-knit community near Houston, Texas. He was a graduate of Kingwood High School, and he was known for his big heart and ability to live life to its fullest extent. He enjoyed travel and he was proud of the fact that he had already traveled to 20 different foreign countries in his short lifetime.

Luke deeply cared about his family back home in Texas and his military family. His fellow Marines said he was

more than just a friend; he was a brother, a brother to everyone who knew him.

Like many Texans, especially those Texans who go to war, Luke chose to enroll in Texas A&M after high school. During his freshman year, he made a decision to leave Texas A&M University. Gary Yepsen, Luke's father, asked him why he didn't want to graduate college and then enter the United States Marine Corps as an officer. Luke said, "I don't want to go into the Marines to tell people what to do. I want to go into the Marines so they can tell me what to do."

Here is what President Ronald Reagan said about the Marines: "Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But the Marines, they don't have that problem."

Luke Yepsen was one of those Marines. With faith in God and country, at 18 Luke enrolled in the United States Marine Corps. He was an assaultman, later a mechanic, which came easy to him because of his love of cars. "He had so much courage and pride, you can't even imagine. You could hear it in his voice how proud he was," said Luke's brother, Kyle. In October of 2006, Luke was deployed to Iraq with the 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. Amid the violence and anarchy in Iraq, Luke's thoughts never waned from the security of home and American freedom. When told by his college roommate that he was praying for him, Luke quickly responded, "Well, I'm praying for you."

On December 14, 2006, at the age of 20, Luke, while fighting the forces of evil, was killed by enemy action in Iraq. For his military service, he was awarded the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Ribbon, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

On the morning of December 22, 2006, hundreds of Kingwood, Texas, residents lined the streets of this community paying tribute to the family of this patriot. Many of those on the streets carried flags, yellow ribbons. Many held banners saying "Proud of You," "Proud to be an American." Some said, "Thank You." As the funeral procession made its way to the church, the residents of Kingwood, with tearful eyes and grateful hearts, saluted the Yepsen family.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that patriotism is alive and well in the United States. And as the Kingwood, Texas, community mourns the loss of America's son, Luke Yepsen, and all those who came before him and all those that will come after him, we know that freedom is not free, and we thank this fearless Marine for dedicating his life to America.

Luke's sacrifice will be etched in the catalogue of history as another Marine